
Welcome to the California Leads Conference

- The presentation will begin shortly.
- All participants will be muted upon entry.
- Live presentations will not be recorded.
- Please use the chat feature to direct questions to “All panelists.” When submitting questions, please do not include any personal information.
- Connecting to audio – “Call using computer” for audio to come through your computer speakers or use “Call in/Call me” feature.

CAL HR

California Leads

2021 Conference





Preparing to Meet with Union Representatives



Audience

You should be in this class if you are an active labor relations practitioner.

Training Ground Rules

- Keep yourself on mute.
- There will be places in the presentation for questions. As an alternate in between these points, submit your questions on the chat function.
- Do not interrupt the presenters or those asking questions or providing feedback.

What We Will Cover

- This interactive session explores best practices regarding:
- Preparing for successful meetings with Union Representatives.
 - The mechanics of release time.

Meeting Lifecycle

Three phases of the meeting lifecycle:

- Preparation
- Conducting the Meeting
- Debriefing/Follow-up

Why are you meeting?

What is your generating event:

- Notice
- JLMC
- Contract Requirement
- Meet and Greet
- Other

Preparing Your Meeting

- Understand the issue you will be meeting on.
- Select the right management representatives to assist you in the meeting.
- What information do you need, who will get it for you.
- Do you need a notetaker?
- Is an agenda or outline appropriate?

Questions

What is the issue?

Anticipate Questions:

- Be comfortable placing yourself on the other side of the table. What you want to know, the others will likely want to know as well.
- Is this a topic historically important to the specific Union
- Understand the position of the union, this will likely focus the types of questions they will have.
- Know state and departmental labor trends.

Selecting Representatives (1/2)

- Representatives should be trustworthy, not in the bargaining unit and should be able to convey a sense of authority or command over the subject or issue in discussion.
- Representatives should have a basic understanding of the role of the parties and their role in the meeting.
- Representatives should have an assertive but problem solving approach.

Selecting Representatives (2/2)

Each meeting should have:

- Chief Negotiator/Main Spokesperson
- Subject Matter Expert(s)
- Notetaker

Setting a Pre-Meeting

- Pre-meetings should be held with sufficient time for any last minute homework or items to be prepared or researched.
- Should include all participating management representatives.
- Should allow time for additional information, adjustments to be made prior the meeting.
- All the management attendees should participate.

Conference Room, Material and Equipment

- Determine size of room required (or attendees on Teams, WebEx, Zoom, etc.)
- Do you need a caucus room or line?
- What equipment or material will you need, ensure you have it ahead of the meeting.
- If you have equipment, test it.
- If you have material, review it (all of it).

Day of the Meeting

- Be calm
- Review your notes
- Review your attendees
- Prepare seating – yes it can matter.

Questions

State Release Time (1/6)

- What is it
- Why authorize it
- Who authorizes it
- What controls it
- What is reasonable

State Release Time (2/6)

What is it?

- State Release Time is authorized state time granted to state employees to participate in meetings with management as a representative of the union.
- While on State Release Time the employee shall suffer no loss in compensation for participating during the meeting or pre or post activities agreed upon by the parties.
- State Release Time counts as hours worked, unless specifically modified by agreement i.e. MOU, Ground Rules.

State Release Time (3/6)

Why authorize it:

- Because it is the 'law', provided by terms of the contract and encourages harmonious labor relations.

State Release Time (4/6)

Who authorizes it?

- State Release Time for departmental meetings, or delegated meetings are approved by the departmental Labor Relations Officer.
- For non-delegated Meet and Confers or CalHR owned meetings CalHR will authorize State Release Time.

State Release Time (5/6)

What controls it:

- The MOU, side letter agreements, or other legally binding tenents.

State Release Time (6/6)

What is Reasonable?

- Many sections of most MOUs provide that State Release Time shall be reasonably provided.
- Reasonable is an objective word, and requires an objective test.
- Time off requests are reasonable if they are:
 - Easily identifiable to the issue
 - Not overreaching in nature
- Litmus Test: Do you need the same amount of pre and post meeting or preparation time.

Questions

Tips on Communicating with the Union (1/2)

- Build and maintain good rapport
- Mutual respect and acknowledgement of each other's value in the workplace.
- Working together in a collaborative environment.
- This approach has the benefit of increasing management / employee communication and engagement in the workplace while also helping management understand the challenges employees are facing on the job.

Tips on Communicating with the Union (2/2)

- Be polite, courteous and respectful.
- Ensuring the right practices are in place so employees can perform their responsibilities under the terms and conditions of the contract.
- Make your position clear
- Strive for win / win.

Tips on Working with the Union When Conflicts Arise

- Conflict is rarely one-sided. Each party owns a role.
- Place yourself in role of the other person as it assists in understanding.
- Refrain from assigning blame during discussions.
- Point to missed communication opportunities.
- Understand the *why* of both parties actions.
- Aim for mutual acceptance the *win / win*

Other Tips on Working with the Union

- Union Reps may be assertive
- Remain calm and do not take anything personal
- If you become angry, take space in a caucus to regain your composure and perspective
- Keep an open mind.
- Continue to actively listen for understanding.
- This means do not argue their point in your head like a debate. You will often miss details.
- Understanding our own emotions and the emotions of others.

Questions